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Improving Trial Court Facilities: Fiscal Year 2009–2010 Funding Requests

Monterey—New South Monterey County Courthouse

Imperial—New El Centro Family Courthouse
Lake—New Lakeport Courthouse
Riverside—New Indio Juvenile and Family Courthouse
Sacramento—New Sacramento Criminal Courthouse
Shasta—New Redding Courthouse
Sonoma—New Santa Rosa Criminal Courthouse
Sutter—New Yuba City Courthouse

In April 2008, the Judicial Council updated its Trial Court Capital-Outlay Plan that includes 152 new-construction, major renovation, and expansion projects estimated to cost \$9.3 billion (January 2008 dollars). The Initial funding request for these eight referenced projects was \$88.2 million for the 2009–2010 Fiscal Year, which would be funded by the Immediate and Critical Needs Account of the State Court Facilities Fund in proposed court revenue bond legislation Senate Bill 1407 (Perata). Their total project costs are estimated to be \$1.4 billion. If approved, these projects mark important progress toward implementing needed projects for trial courts across California.

New South Monterey County Courthouse

A new South Monterey County Courthouse is proposed for initial funding of \$1.3 million for FY 2009–2010. The new facility will house three courtrooms. The estimated total cost for this courthouse of approximately 47,200 gross square feet is \$65.0 million (escalated to construction mid-point in Spring 2014). This project is ranked in the Immediate Need Project Priority Group of the Trial Court Capital-Outlay Plan and is one of the highest priority capital-outlay projects for the judicial branch.

Lack of Security, Severe Overcrowding, Poor Physical Conditions, and Reduced Access to Court Services

The proposed new courthouse will accomplish the following immediately-needed improvements to the superior court and enhance its ability to serve the public:

- Replace the unsafe and physically deficient King City Courthouse;
- Expand court services—including the return of civil and small claims case processing to the southern part of the county—by increasing judicial-proceedings

capacity, moving from two to three courtrooms to accommodate one new judgeship from proposed Senate Bill 1150 (Corbett);

- Enhance access to court services by expanding to a full-service courthouse for south county residents, enabling the court to operate more effectively and efficiently in the south county area. This project returns civil, including jury trials, and small claims case processing to the south county area, eliminating the need for south county residents to drive from 65 to upwards of 100 miles for these services;
- Provide basic services heretofore not provided to south county area residents due to space restrictions: a self-help center, a jury assembly room, a children's waiting room, adequately-sized in-custody holding, an alternative dispute resolution center, attorney interview/witness waiting rooms, and the capability to hold proceedings on state prison cases in the same region in which they are derived—from the state prison facilities in the City of Soledad—instead of 50 miles away at the Salinas Courthouse Complex;
- Provide site capacity for a future building addition for one future new judgeship; and
- Reduce case load processing and overcrowding at the existing Monterey County Courthouse and at the Salinas Courthouse Complex, by shifting civil and small claims cases to the new courthouse.



No Secure Sallyport for Prisoner Transport into the King City Courthouse

Local Government Collaboration on Project

In March 2008, AOC staff met with leaders of local city governments in the southern region of the county (i.e., the cities of Greenfield, Soledad, and King City) to gain an understanding of properties that may be available in the future for the new courthouse

and to discuss potential economic opportunities in the forms of land donations or below-market land acquisition costs. At this time, official resolutions have been passed by the Redevelopment Agency of the City of Greenfield—offering a land donation for the new courthouse site, adjacent to a site that is planned to be the future home of their police department and city hall—and by the cities of Soledad and King City—pledging their assistance during the AOC’s site selection and acquisition process. While AOC staff did not meet with either the City of Gonzales or the County of Monterey to discuss potential sites, all local municipalities will be able to offer available sites for consideration at the time initial project funding is achieved.

Long-term Funding Needs

The California legislature is considering authorizing a revenue bond to pay for the state’s most urgently needed court projects. This legislation proposes increasing criminal penalties and other filing fees to be contributed to the State Court Facilities Construction Fund for the sole purpose of funding court construction projects.

More Information

A project feasibility report for the New South Monterey County Courthouse, dated July 1, 2008, was prepared by AOC staff. This report documents the poor functional and physical conditions of the existing King City court facility in Monterey County, explores options for how best to meet the needs of the court and of the public, and estimates the cost to construct a new facility. This document can be downloaded from the following Web site:

www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/occm/documents/pfr-monterey.pdf

For further information, please email the AOC-Office of Court Construction and Management at OCCM@jud.ca.gov.